



**CCHR Briefing Note – April 2014**

**Freedom of Association for Unions**

**Executive Summary**

This Briefing Note focuses on the right to freedom of association for unions in the Kingdom of Cambodia (“Cambodia”), through examining the current status of freedom of association in the country; considering the drafting of the Law on Trade Unions (the “Law”), which the Royal Government of Cambodia (the “RGC”) has pledged to adopt by the end of 2014; and offering concrete recommendations to the RGC on the draft Law to ensure it complies with international human rights standards and guarantees the right to freedom of association. As of yet, requests from civil society to review the draft Law have been denied. Moreover, reports have emerged recently of new unions being refused registration by the authorities or having their registrations delayed, a direct attack on the right to freedom of association. From December 2013 to date, the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (“CCHR”) has documented six cases<sup>1</sup> in which the authorities have denied or delayed new union registration, or threatened license revocation.

The first section of this Briefing Note describes the international and domestic legislative landscape related to the right to freedom of association and the registration of unions in Cambodia, and the union registration process in accordance with the Labor Law 1997. The second section examines freedom of association in Cambodia, focusing on the recent threats of license revocation unions have faced and the emerging trend whereby unions have been refused registration or have had their registration delayed since December 2013. Finally, the third section provides series of recommendations, among which are the following key suggestions to the RGC:

- Publicly and widely publish the draft of the Law on Trade Unions to allow for genuine consultation with sufficient time for analysis and comments on the draft by relevant stakeholders such as civil society organizations (“CSOs”);
- Ensure that sufficient time is taken to draft the Law, including providing ample time for lawmakers, CSOs and technical experts to read drafts and provide feedback, as well as a period to address and incorporate this feedback;
- Ensure the right of freedom of association is fully respected in Cambodia and complied with international standards and ensure that existing laws are properly implemented, applied and respected; and
- Ensure union registrations are resumed immediately and that registration requests are not further delayed.

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<sup>1</sup> Information was collected through the monitoring of international and local media and via telephone conversations with affected union leaders

This Briefing Note is written by CCHR, a non-aligned, independent, non-governmental organization that works to promote and protect democracy and respect for human rights – primarily civil and political rights – throughout Cambodia.

## **The Right to Freedom of Association guaranteed in theory**

### Domestic and international law

The right to freedom of association is promoted and protected under Cambodian law. Article 36 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia (the “Constitution”) provides that Khmer citizens shall have the right to “*form and be members of trade unions,*”<sup>2</sup> while Article 37 guarantees the right to strike and engage in non-violent demonstrations. Furthermore, Article 266 of the Labor Law stipulates that workers and employers have the right to form professional organizations for the exclusive purpose of studying, promoting the interests, and protecting the rights of the persons covered by the organization’s statutes.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, Article 31 of the Constitution states that Cambodia shall recognize and respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (“UDHR”) and the covenants and conventions related to human rights, thereby incorporating the UDHR and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the “ICCPR”), ratified by Cambodia in 1992, into domestic law.<sup>4</sup> The right to freedom of association is enshrined in both the UDHR and the ICCPR. Article 20 of the UDHR<sup>5</sup> states that “*everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association,*” while Article 23 specifies that “*everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.*” Article 22 of the ICCPR,<sup>6</sup> also provides for the universal right to freedom of association and union membership. In addition to recognizing the rights to freedom of association, Article 22 of the ICCPR provides guidance on the potential acceptable restrictions to freedom of association, stating that “*No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedom of others.*”

Providing further protection is the International Labour Organization (“ILO”)’s 1948 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, one of the eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO, which was ratified by the RGC in 1999. The Convention explicitly calls for the protection of freedom of association and states, “*workers and employers, without distinction whatsoever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organization concerned, to join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization.*”<sup>7</sup> The same Convention further asserts that “*the law of the land [of those countries that have ratified the convention] shall not be such as to impair, nor shall it be so applied as to impair, the guarantees*

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<sup>2</sup> Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, 21 September 1993. Article 36 <http://bit.ly/19Ey1Ms>

<sup>3</sup> Labor Law, 13 March 1997. Article 266 <<http://bit.ly/1qNYLRY>>

<sup>4</sup> As confirmed by the decision of the Constitutional Council dated 10 July 2007, Constitutional Council of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Decision No. 092/003/2007 (10 July 2007) <<http://bit.ly/1rmdbcj>>

<sup>5</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Adopted 10 December 1948, UNGA Res 217 A (III)) (UDHR), Article 20 <<http://bit.ly/1aRyxCs>>

<sup>6</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 22 <<http://bit.ly/1eeGc40>>

<sup>7</sup> Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) Article 2 <<http://bit.ly/1cTRtbB>>

provided for in this Convention.”<sup>8</sup> Once ratified, the ILO Conventions create legally binding obligations for that government.

### Union registration process

In order for a union to gain legally recognized status, the founders of that union must file their status, a list of names of those responsible for management and administration, along with a statement of constitution with the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (the “MLVT”) for registration. According to Article 268 of the Labor Law, “*if the Ministry in Charge of Labor does not reply within two months after receipt of the registration form, the professional organization is considered to be already registered.*”<sup>9</sup>

To be eligible for registered union status, the members responsible for management and administration must satisfy the following requirements: be at least 25 years of age; be able to read and write Khmer; have no criminal convictions; and have engaged in the profession or job for at least one year.<sup>10</sup> Up until recently, the stipulation in Article 269 that states leaders must not “*have been convicted of any crime*” has not been enforced. However, the MLVT this year has made the decision to require union leaders to provide evidence of a clean criminal record before registering new branches.<sup>11</sup> Misdemeanors as well as felonies appear on criminal records in Cambodia.

In practice, obtaining proof of a clean criminal record is a complex process. In order to do so, applicants must buy an application form from the Ministry of Justice, the cost of which is \$1 (or 4,000 Riel). Once the form is completed, the application must be submitted along with the necessary documentation – birth certificate, identity card and family book. The official fee is \$7.50 (or 30,000 Riel) to obtain the proof of criminal record in 20 working days from the date of submitting the application. To expedite this process the applicant can pay a fee of \$15 (or 60,000 Riel) and receive the criminal record in 12 working days from the date of submitting the application.<sup>12</sup> Once a union leader has received proof of their criminal record from the Ministry of Justice, they are then permitted to present this with their application for union registration with the MLVT. It is important to note that the requirement of submitting proof of a clean criminal record to register a union is not standard practice internationally. Furthermore, this new development raises concerns of further corruption and intimidation of union leaders, whilst union leaders engaged in lengthy legal disputes will face difficulty in registering new unions. It has been noted that unions will be vulnerable to being subject to waiting months to obtain letters from the Ministry of Justice, or will be forced to pay bribes in order to expedite the process.<sup>13</sup> Given the lack of independence of the criminal justice system, of great concern is the fact that if union leaders are falsely convicted for participating in protests they will no longer have clean criminal records, and thus the MLVT will be permitted in refusing union registration from such leaders. Union

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, Article 8

<sup>9</sup> Labor Law, 13 March 1997. Article 268 <<http://bit.ly/1qNYLRY>>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, Article 269

<sup>11</sup> Khy Sovuthy and Colin Meyn, ‘Union Reps Must Prove Clean Criminal Records’ *The Cambodia Daily* (7 March 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1hk0gzq>>

<sup>12</sup> Conversations via telephone between an official from the Criminal Records Department, Ministry of Justice, and CCHR staff on 26 March 2014

<sup>13</sup> Hul Reaksmey, ‘GMAC Applauds Government Decision to Screen Union Leaders’ *The Cambodia Daily* (10 March 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1igf6KG>>

leaders are frequently targeted as will be demonstrated in the next section, and thus such an eventuality is likely to be commonplace.

### **In Practice: A Dire Situation for Unions In Cambodia**

Despite the fact that international and domestic law protects the right to freedom of association in Cambodia, the situation of freedom of association for trade unions is dire. The garment sector in particular, Cambodia's largest export earner,<sup>14</sup> is plagued by widespread disregard for and violations of the right to freedom of association. Over the past several years, Cambodia has been increasingly seen as a dangerous country in which to be a trade unionist and union members are often met with violence and arrest for their activities in a climate of impunity.<sup>15</sup>

Strikes, protests and demonstrations led by trade unions are frequently dispersed violently by the authorities, with the use of live ammunition becoming increasingly commonplace.<sup>16</sup> In addition, union workers, as well as union representatives and leaders, are regularly summarily fired as a result of their union related activities. In early January 2014, at least 50 members of the Collective Union of Movement of Workers and Cambodian Alliance Trade Union ("CATU") were fired from several factories in the Manhattan Special Economic Zone in Svay Rieng province, allegedly for participating in strikes that occurred in December 2013.<sup>17</sup> Union members are also targeted for their activism. Several garment factories have decided to pursue legal action against workers seeking compensation for damage to property during the recent strikes and for incitement. Moreover, the RGC has threatened unions that, if they participate in further strikes, they will have their licenses suspended or cancelled, while union leaders could face potential lawsuits.<sup>18</sup> After the garment workers' protests in January, Rong Chhun, head of the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association ("CITA"), was summoned by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court for questioning about incitement of criminal acts and social disturbance.<sup>19</sup>

Of great concern are incidences of union leaders receiving death threats or even being killed as a result of their union activities. In the last ten years, three trade union leaders – Chea Vichea, Ros Sovannareth and Hy Vuthy – have been assassinated in Cambodia. Most notably, Chea Vichea, the then-leader of the Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia ("FTUWKC"), was gunned down in broad daylight in central Phnom Penh on 22 January 2004.<sup>20</sup> Although, the police arrested two men – Born Samnang and Sok Sam Oeun – and charged them with murder, it soon became apparent that they were only scapegoats used to protect Vichea's real killers. The two accused were acquitted on 25 September 2013, and the real perpetrators remain at large.

More recently, in November 2013, Ath Thorn, president of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel

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<sup>14</sup> May Kunmakara, 'Cambodia's garment industry expanding' *The Phnom Penh Post* (4 June 2013) <<http://bit.ly/1hVFS9d>>

<sup>15</sup> CCHR, 'Fundamental Freedoms Series: Freedom of Association and Union Membership' (January 2014) (Fact Sheet) <<http://bit.ly/1h4r2zh>>

<sup>16</sup> CCHR, 'Excessive Use of Force Against Demonstrators in 2013' (3 January 2014) (Briefing Note) <<http://bit.ly/1myvCXB>>

<sup>17</sup> Mom Kunthea and Sean Teehan, 'Svay Rieng garment workers fired, suspended' *The Phnom Penh post* (10 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/NNm5iU>>

<sup>18</sup> Aun Pheap, 'Unions Tell Garment Workers to Suspend Strike' *The Cambodia Daily* (8 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1gSUynN>>

<sup>19</sup> Mu Sochua, 'Another dark day in our history' *The Phnom Penh Post* (13 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1ImSKID>>

<sup>20</sup> CCHR, "'Workers' Rights are Human Rights" The Garment Industry in Cambodia' (Policy Brief) (January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/OUKbcq>>

Workers' Democratic Union ("C.CAWDU"), reported that he had received several anonymous phone calls, during which he and other union officials received death threats.

Alarming, businesses in Cambodia have made attempts to end the right to unionize. Following a business forum held in March 2014, Nang Sothy, vice chairman of the RGC's Labor Advisory Committee, requested that Prime Minister Hun Sen reconsider Cambodia's status as a signatory to the ILO's Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention.<sup>21</sup> Workers have reported that garment factories frequently take advantage of bureaucratic procedures for the registration of unions and some factories have even refused to receive notifications for union formation, producing lengthy delays.<sup>22</sup> In late 2013, the ILO acknowledged Cambodia as one of three country cases that were the most serious and urgent regarding freedom of association.<sup>23</sup> Despite this stark reality, the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia ("GMAC") claims that freedom of association is being abused by unions whilst the *"multiplicity of unions has and remains the garment and footwear industry's biggest challenge in Cambodia."*<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, GMAC issued a paid advertisement in *The Phnom Penh Post* on 29 January 2014 and over subsequent days claiming that the right to strike as a fundamental right is not provided for in the ILO's Convention 87 on freedom of association. The notice went on to state: *"Is the right to strike therefore a fundamental right? NO. The right to strike is NOT a fundamental right."* The ILO since responded that they have always regarded the right to strike as a fundamental right of workers and their unions.<sup>25</sup>

Although freedom of association for general workers in Cambodia is dire, for civil servants the situation is worse. As per the 1994 Common Statute of Civil Servants, civil servants do not have the freedom to form unions. In Cambodia, civil servants encompass an unusually broad spectrum of professions, including bureaucrats, doctors, nurses, police and teachers, many of which earn unlivable wages.<sup>26</sup> Due to their inability to unionize as prescribed by the law, civil servants lack collective bargaining power to remedy their low wages and to raise their rights.

#### Threats of license revocation

Of great concern is the emerging trend of the RGC threatening to revoke unions' licenses and file lawsuits against union leaders. For example, the unions behind the garment workers' strikes of December 2013 to January 2014 – the National Independent Federation of Textile Unions in Cambodia ("NIFTUC"), the Collective Union of Movement of Workers ("CUMW"), C.CAWDU, FTUWKC and CATU – have been threatened with license revocation. On 30 December 2013, the Council of Ministers sent Labor Minister Ith Sam Heng a letter recommending that the responsible unions have their licenses revoked and their leaders be prosecuted if they did not halt the protests.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Hul Reaksmey and Alex Willemyns, 'End Right to Unionize, Businesses Ask Hun Sen' *The Cambodia Daily* (5 March 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1ctedPx>>

<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Watch, 'Cambodia: Garment Factories Thwarting Unions' (3 February 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1dlSvH1>>

<sup>23</sup> ILO, 'ILO Governing Body adopts report of the Committee on Freedom of Association' (Press Release) (31 October 2013) <<http://bit.ly/1IN0GT2>>

<sup>24</sup> GMAC, 'What EVERYONE needs to know about ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and the Right to Strike' (Statement) (27 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/NqmKqD>>

<sup>25</sup> Shane Worrell and Mom Kunthear, 'Right to strike 'fundamental'' *The Phnom Penh Post* (30 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1ms4OuN>>

<sup>26</sup> David Boyle and Phak Seangly, 'Civil servants' union dilemma' *The Phnom Penh Post* (30 October 2012) <<http://bit.ly/PmgHnV>>

<sup>27</sup> Aun Pheap, 'Unions Tell Garment Workers to Suspend Strike' *The Cambodia Daily* (8 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1gSUynN>>

In addition, CITA was targeted when they received a letter dated 27 December 2013, signed by the Minister of Interior, Sar Kheng, threatening to deregister CITA. Although as yet CITA has no official union registration from the MLVT, if the Ministry of Interior deregistered the association they would no longer be able to legally operate. The letter came after CITA, led by Rong Chhun, threatened to embark on a one-week strike to call for an increased minimum wage to \$250 for teachers.<sup>28</sup>

#### Potential Deliberate Suspension of union registration

The denial of union registration is certainly not a new phenomenon in Cambodia. The Cambodian Confederation of Unions (“CCU”), also led by Rong Chhun, has had its application for official registration denied in both 2006 and 2012, on the grounds that some of its unions represent civil servants, who are not covered under the Labor Law. CCU encompasses seven unions and associations, representing over 90,000 workers - without official registration CCU lacks collective bargaining strength and the ability to negotiate with employers.<sup>29</sup> However, recent events suggest that the suppression of union registration has taken on a new momentum. On 26 February 2014, Heng Sour, spokesman for the MLVT announced that the RGC would not be issuing licenses to new unions until the impending Trade Union Law is adopted and implemented. Elaborating further, Mr. Sour stated that the suspension was necessary as the MLVT was concerned about the large number of unions that have been registered with the government.<sup>30</sup> The following day however, the MLVT issued a written statement declaring that they had “*not suspended any new registrations of professional associations,*” and rather they were strengthening registration mechanisms to be “*more effective, timely, and transparent in line with the principles of the existing law.*”<sup>31</sup> Despite this contradictory declaration, CCHR has encountered several cases that suggest the RGC has indeed suspended union registration and the right to associate for the foreseeable future.

Ms. Yang Sophon, president of CATU, stated that CATU’s four registration applications made during December 2013 and January 2014 were delayed by the MLVT. Despite being informed by the MLVT that they would begin to receive new registration requests from 27 February 2014 onwards, as yet, her four requests have still not been registered and she has been told to attach criminal records of each representative along with the applications. This requirement was made known to her not through an official letter from the MLVT, but via verbal notification from a MLVT official.<sup>32</sup>

On 14 January 2014, the Cambodian Food and Service Worker Federation (“CFSWF”) was denied official registration, according to Tep Phalin, a CFSWF deputy, who claims: “*When we tried to register with the Ministry of Labor, they claimed that right now the country’s situation is bad, and they could not approve our certificate.*”<sup>33</sup> CFSWF represents workers in the food and beverage industry, including beer promoters, and thus far has no legal recognition to protect its workers.

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<sup>28</sup> May Titthara and Shane Worrell, ‘Teachers union targeted’ *The Phnom Penh Post* (2 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1enLCcX>>

<sup>29</sup> Shane Worrell and Mom Kunthear, ‘Cambodian Confederation of Unions denied recognition again’ *The Phnom Penh Post* (22 June 2012) <<http://bit.ly/1oxnkiY>>

<sup>30</sup> Aun Pheap, ‘Gov’t Suspends Freedom of Association for Unions’ *The Cambodia Daily* (27 February 2014) <<http://bit.ly/OGjQiN>>

<sup>31</sup> The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, Press Statement, Phnom Penh (26 February 2014)

<sup>32</sup> Conversations via telephone between Ms. Sophon, president of CATU, and CCHR staff on 27 February 2014 and 20 March 2014

<sup>33</sup> Sen David, ‘No union for workers in food biz’ *The Phnom Penh Post* (15 January 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1hXFZVv>>



Ms. Mam Nhem, leader of NIFTUC, claims that in January 2014, two registration applications she made were delayed by the MLVT, whose representative verbally informed her that they delay receiving such requests. Her union submitted a further request in early March, which was also refused by the MLVT, which gave as a reason that representatives must now submit a criminal record issued by the Ministry of Justice; and that a video recording showing the election process within the factory must be included with the application.<sup>34</sup> In accordance with the Labor Law, to register a new union there is no such stipulation that requires a video recording of a union's election process.

On 26 February 2014, Chea Mony, president of FTUWKC, claimed the MLVT had refused to register 10 local branches of its organization, despite meeting the legal requirements outlined by the Labor Law, and as such had issued a letter of complaint to Prime Minister Hun Sen seeking intervention. Mr. Mony states: *"I submitted a proposal with the registration department at the Labor Ministry to register local unions in factories and enterprises, but one officer told me his minister [Ith Sam Heng] temporarily banned issuing [licenses for unions]."*<sup>35</sup> He adds that the 10 new FTUWKC branches will begin operating regardless of whether consent is given by the MLVT, as their application was legal. Despite the MLVT's denial that it has suspended new registrations, Mr. Mony firmly believes that the ban on new union registration is indeed in force.<sup>36</sup>

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

It is evident that the right to freedom of association is heavily stifled in Cambodia, exacerbated further by what CCHR has documented as the increasing suppression of union registration since December 2013 to date – either through denying or delaying new registration, or through threats of license revocation. The dire situation of freedom of association, particularly for unions, has the potential to be made worse when compounded by the adoption of the impending Law on Trade Unions, with its probable provisions for the suspension of trade unions, which have been publically referred to by RGC officials.<sup>37</sup> A first draft was introduced by the RGC in 2011 but was shelved after civil society groups and trade unions raised concerns regarding certain provisions in the draft Law, including concerns that the Law would make trade unions highly vulnerable to dissolution and de-registration, that the Law provided for burdensome and discriminatory requirements for individuals seeking leadership positions in unions, and that it provided the RGC with too much discretion over decision-making in these areas, amongst other such issues.<sup>38</sup> However, it appears the Law was submitted for review by the Council of Ministers in late 2013 and the RGC has pledged to pass the Law by the end of 2014.<sup>39</sup> It is important that the RGC respects its obligations to protect the right to freedom of association for unions as per domestic and international law.

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<sup>34</sup> Conversations via telephone between Ms. Nhem, president of NIFTUC, and CCHR staff on 27 February 2014 and 20 March 2014

<sup>35</sup> Aun Pheap, 'Gov't Suspends Freedom of Association for Unions' *The Cambodia Daily* (27 February 2014) <<http://bit.ly/OGiQiN>>

<sup>36</sup> Aun Pheap, 'Labor Ministry Denies It Has Stopped Recognizing Unions' *The Cambodia Daily* (28 February 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1j3S2hk>>

<sup>37</sup> Hul Reaksmey and Colin Meyn, 'Government's Trade Union Law May Limit Freedom of Association' *The Cambodia Daily* (13 March 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1fUIhDq>>

<sup>38</sup> CCHR, Fundamental Freedoms Series: Freedom of Association and Union Membership (January 2014) (Fact Sheet) <<http://bit.ly/1h4r2zh>>

<sup>39</sup> Hul Reaksmey and Colin Meyn, 'Government's Trade Union Law May Limit Freedom of Association' *The Cambodia Daily* (13 March 2014) <<http://bit.ly/1fUIhDq>>

### Draft Law on Trade Unions

The way the Law is drafted will have an extensive impact on freedom of association for unions in Cambodia. The RGC must ensure that the draft Law complies with the RGC's obligations under international law in order to ensure that freedom of association, protected under the Constitution, the UDHR and the ICCPR, along with other human rights instruments to which Cambodia is a signatory, is respected. The Law has the potential to severely restrict the right to freedom of association for unions in Cambodia, thus the process of drafting should be an inclusive and lengthy process. As such, CCHR recommends that, before drafting the law, the RGC:

- Publicly and widely publish drafts of the Law to allow for genuine consultation with sufficient time for analysis and comments on the draft by relevant stakeholders, including CSOs;
- Ensure that sufficient time is taken to draft the Law; sufficient time must be provided for lawmakers, CSOs and technical experts to read drafts and provide feedback, as well a period to address these concerns;
- Clearly and explicitly state the extent of restrictions on unions made through the Law;
- Ensure the right of freedom of association is fully respected and comply with and ensure that existing laws are properly implemented, applied and respected; and
- Develop a thorough training mechanism for officials to interpret, apply and enforce the Law.

### Suppression of union registration

Despite the MLVT's statements to the contrary, it is evident that new unions, since December 2013, are increasingly being refused legal registration status, or are having their registrations delayed, a direct attack on the right to freedom of association. This is further compounded by the fact that garment factories have reportedly been delaying the registration process by refusing to receive notifications of union formation and by the newly enforced stipulation that union leaders are required to submit criminal records with their applications. As such, CCHR recommends that the RGC:

- Ensure union registrations are resumed immediately, put an end to the delaying of the registration process and follow the usual practice of registering unions pending the adoption of the Law on Trade Unions;
- Remove any stipulation in the law that union leaders must obtain and submit proof of a clean criminal record to register a new union;
- Review union registration applications that have been denied or delayed since December 2013;
- Immediately put an end to threatening license revocation against unions;
- Immediately drop unlawful charges against union leaders; and
- Ensure that garment factories and other businesses protect the right to freedom of association, respect workers' rights and accept receiving notifications of union formation to put an end to registration delays.

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